

Message Text

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FODAG

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REF: STATE 284208

SUMMARY: A DESCRIPTION OF U.S. GOVERNMENT'S ACCESS TO INFORMATION IT DESIRES PER SEPTEL ON FAO IS HARD TO ANSWER IN ABSTRACT. IF USG MAKES FORMAL APPROACH TO REVIEW INTERNAL OPERATION OF FAO, THEN FAO RESPONDS FORMALLY, FREQUENTLY DEFENSIVELY AS MIGHT BE EXPECTED. IF USG MAKES QUIET, INFORMAL CONTACT WITH ACQUAINTANCES AT FAO, RESPONSE IS ALMOST INVARIABLY COOPERATIVE, OPEN AND FRIENDLY. OBVIOUSLY SUBJECT OF INQUIRY ALSO MAKES A DIFFERENCE, ESPECIALLY NOW WITH DG SAOUMA'S PROPENSITY TO KEEP HIS PLANS WITHIN A SMALL TIGHT-KNIT CABINET. END SUMMARY

1. BASIC POLICY OF FAO IS TO MAINTAIN INFORMAL, OPEN, COOPERATIVE RELATIONSHIP WITH ITS MEMBER STATES. (HOWEVER, FAO MUST CONSIDER ANY SPECIAL REQUEST FOR INFORMATION FROM POINT OF VIEW OF WHETHER IT RESPONDS TO REQUEST IT CAN RESPOND SIMILARLY TO 135 OTHER MEMBER GOVERNMENTS.) FINALLY, IF FAO BELIEVES A MEMBER STATE IS INTERVENING IN FAO MANAGEMENT OR INVESTIGATING IT, THEN RELATIONSHIP RAPIDLY BECOMES MORE DISTANT.

2. INFORMAL REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION FROM US REPRESENTATIVE ARE EASIER FOR FAO TO HANDLE. LONG ASSOCIATION AND POSITIVE ASSISTANCE OF FODAG AND OTHER USG OFFICES HAVE BUILT UP A RESERVOIR
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OF FRIENDSHIP AND EASY WORKING RELATIONSHIPS THAT PERMIT FREE

AND EASY EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION. NEW DIRECTOR-GENERAL SAOUMA IS MORE SECRETIVE ABOUT HIS OWN PLANS SO THERE ARE LIMITS TO U.S. PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE'S ABILITY TO OBTAIN INFORMATION FROM FAO, BUT BASICALLY ATMOSPHERE IS ONE OF COOPERATION AND DESIRE TO KEEP USG SATISFIED.

3. DURING VISIT OF ONE GAO TEAM, FAO SECRETARIAT COULD NOT PROVIDE SOME STATISTICS ON NUMBERS OF US CANDIDACIES IN PAST. HOWEVER, THIS WAS DUE TO NON-AVAILABILITY OF FIGURES WITHOUT DAYS OF REVIEWING PAST FILES. FAO WAS ALSO RELUCTANT TO SHOW GAO TEAM REPORTS OF INTERNAL AUDITORS, BUT DID AGREE TO MEETING WITH INTERNAL AUDITORS AT WHICH THERE WAS FREE FLOW OF QUESTIONS.

4. FAO PROBABLY WOULD CONSIDER MEMBER STATES AS SHAREHOLDERS, BUT TO CONTINUE ANALOGY THEY WOULD CONSIDER THE US AS A LARGE SHAREHOLDER WITH A MEMBER ON THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS, BUT NOT PART OF MANAGEMENT. THE FAO ALSO REALIZES THE ADVANTAGE OF KEEPING A LARGE SHAREHOLDER REASONABLY CONTENTED AND THE POSSIBLE DIFFICULTIES AN UNHAPPY SHAREHOLDER OR MEMBER STATE CAN MAKE.

5. REGULAR REQUESTS TO FAO RELATE TO PERSONNEL, SALARIES, AND OVER-DUE CONTRIBUTIONS. ON AN IRREGULAR BUT ALMOST CONTINUOUS BASIS GAOAG OFFICERS CHECK ON FAO MEETINGS, BUDGET PLANNING, PERSONNEL APPOINTMENTS, PREPARATION OF DOCUMENTS, AND SAHEL RELIEF EFFORTS. MOST OF REST OF FAO PROGRAMS ARE REVIEWED DURING MEETINGS, VISITS OF US OFFICIALS WORKING IN A SPECIFIC FIELD, AND IN RESPONSE TO SPECIFIC REQUESTS FROM WASHINGTON. BEAUDRY

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